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on the subject which Dr. J. H. Stevenson had in preparation. But in the discussions on the dockets which are actually found on tablets with which he has to deal, Mr. Johns gives his own readings of these important contributions to the subject. This he was, of course, bound to do. Whether what he has said will stand the test of expert examination, remains to be seen. At any rate, he admits that more careful attention to the Aramaic would have saved him from some misreadings of the cuneiform. He does not figure the seals either. This would probably require photography, and any discussion of them would be premature without special study. He seems to hold out some hope of a selection of figures for the somewhat vague appendix which he continually promises, but which seems as far off as ever.

Students of comparative law and of early institutions will find much to interest them and to carry back the origin of many things to an eastern source and an early date.

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### SOCIN ON ARABIC POETRY.<sup>1</sup>

It is hard to find a side on which to approach, to describe, to estimate, such a work as this without leaving other sides untouched or unemphasized which are at least as worthy of primary treatment. How could a reviewer of the time have dealt adequately with Sir William Jones's version of the *Mu'allaqāt*, how with the first version of the *Arabian Nights*, how even with Terrick Hamilton's *Antar*? There were beginnings in these, there were aspects, literary, sociological, linguistic, which then could have been only dimly apprehended, and the fulness of whose sweep and width, backward and forward, as history and as influence, none then could have gauged.

So it is with the present book. In spite of the drily scientific attitude and tone which are painfully maintained in it, there can be no mistaking the fact that here there is a new thing—a thing, at least, for the first time known in any of its fulness—with which the history of the race and the history of literature must now deal. Further, this thing is not of the dead past as were the *Mu'allaqāt*, nor does it live in fairyland as do the *Nights*, but it is an existent reality in our day, a genuine literary revelation and force, as absolutely fresh as the scraps of barbaric verse which may come to us from tribes in Africa or South America, and infinitely more perfect and true. Those are of interest to us only because men have sung them; these, which we have here, we can treasure for themselves.

It will be well first to state shortly what is contained in this book. Following in the traces of Wallin and Wetzstein, and largely under the

<sup>1</sup> *DIWAN AUS CENTRALARABIEN*. Gesammelt, übersetzt und erläutert von Albert Socin. Herausgegeben von Hans Stumme. III Theile. Des XIX Bandes der Abhandlungen der philologisch-historischen Classe der königlichen sächsischen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften. Leipzig: 1900, 1901. iv + 300, iv + 146, x + 354 pp.

stimulus of a university *colleg* on modern Arabian poetry held by the latter in Berlin, the late Professor Socin, during his stay in the East in 1869-70, made it an object to collect and study specimens of this desert poetry. These he worked at with the same elaborate care in transcription and exposition which he had given to his similar studies in Kurdish and modern Aramaic. In part, the poems were dictated to him from memory and, in part, read from a manuscript collection which he picked up, a *safina* to be used by a wandering reciter, much such in appearance and purpose as that careless but priceless manuscript of *Aucassin et Nicolette*, which alone has preserved to us the old romance. In Arabia proper Professor Socin does not seem himself to have ever been; Mesopotamia and the Arab 'Irāq were the farthest which he reached. Nor do the reciters whom he employed seem to have been of remarkable ability. It is left in doubt, even, to what extent they were professional *rāwis* and to what mere amateurs. The best, a man of the tribe of 'Aqēl and a native of Brēde, had himself made verses in his youth, but, later, had turned, after a fashion, to sacred learning. Socin considered him "sicher einer der besten Kenner der heutigen Nedschd-poesie," but for so strong an opinion there seems little ground. Certain only is that he was the best that Socin found outside of Arabia. If he had himself penetrated to Brēde, Hāil or Riād, the case would probably have been different. Another far inferior reciter was from Anēze in Nejd, and a third still worse was from northern Ḥasā, which cannot be reckoned to the true Arabia. From this last, however, the manuscript spoken of above was obtained. So there grew up what Professor Socin calls, not inaptly, a kind of *Ḥamāsa*, a collection of poems written down in Arabic and transcription with translation, introductory remarks as to the occasion of each and glosses on the difficult words and phrases—the basis at least for future labor.

These recitations, then, and the manuscript in question form the basis of the present book. Professor Socin kept them lying by him, apparently, for nearly thirty years and then turned to study them again with the assistance of what material he could elsewhere gather. Of that the first part was the *Collegienheft*, containing his notes from Wetzstein's lectures, dealing with the poems which Wallin had published in *ZDMG.*, Vols. V and VI, and with some from Wetzstein's own collection. Second, and perhaps more important, were the three manuscripts brought back by Charles Huber from Nejd and now preserved in the library of the University of Strassburg. There were other scraps, also, gathered here and there, but nothing else of account. The collections of Landberg and Wetzstein were inaccessible. On this basis, then, the book is built up, and after the following plan: First is given the material of the *diwān* itself in Arabic text and transcription throughout, printed page for page, and with a running commentary at the foot of each page. The transcription is the basis and the Arabic text is given, from manuscripts or by reconstruction, mostly as a concession to those weaker brethren who prefer to read Arabic in Arabic characters. The commentary consists

partly of original glosses derived from the reciters mentioned above and partly of notes by Professor Socin himself. In the reconstruction of the text, so far as that was attempted, the editor was guided in the first instance by metrical considerations, and, secondly, by grammar and the analogy of the language. Yet but little attempt has been made to restore the poems into their presumed original form as to order and number of verses, etc. Even when the same *qaṣīda* existed in several recensions, manuscript or oral, it was apparently felt that there were no adequate materials for such restoration. The utmost achieved has been to deal with each verse separately. It is significant for the importance which Professor Socin attached to meter that the gaps in the text are marked in metrical signs; at these points there must originally have stood such and such a combination of long and short syllables. At the end of this first part on the text come a number of excursus dealing with points which could be better treated when grouped; *e. g.*, the camel and its saddle, weapons, parts of the body, etc. These are singularly useful and informing; the only pity is that they do not extend further, as, *e. g.*, over the camel-litter. The second part consists of a translation of the texts, with some few notes added. This translation is, of purpose, flat and dull to a degree. All more ornate language has been carefully avoided, and the utmost simplicity and exactness of rendering attempted. Some few passages have been left in the decent obscurity of the original; unfortunately, they, as usual, are of high importance sociologically and as pictures of manners. The third part covers the introduction, glossary and indices with the final notes of the editor. The introduction extends to 244 pages, of which 174 are devoted to an analysis of the grammar and 20 to the meters. All is of the first importance and is a most weighty contribution to Arabic dialectology. In it we learn what Professor Socin's opinion was of the texts presented. They are of two kinds, literary and popular, couched in essentially different dialects. The literary dialect is one which has to be learned even by the natives of central Arabia; the popular dialect, called *nabṭī*, is their mother-tongue. It is interesting to find that the name of the despised peasantry who spoke broken Arabic in the early days has now passed over to mean, even in Arabia itself, the Arabic of common life. In the first are written, recited, and sung *qaṣīdas*, similar in all essentials to the *qaṣīdas* of classical Arabic; in the second are sung and recited such songs and tales as appeal to the people. The first is part of a literary development extending from the poems of Imr al-Qays to those of the court poets today at Brēde, Ḥāil, or Riād; in the second is the truly popular poetry of Arabia. In the first at least five of the old meters can be recognized — among which *ṭawīl* is overwhelmingly the most frequent, and the language is much the same for the whole of Arabia, being a literary *lingua franca* apart from the common speech. On the vexed question of *i'rāb* in modern Arabic Professor Socin had, as is well known, a very definite opinion. Whether that opinion would have held if he had himself traveled in Arabia proper may be a question, but it is here laid down

absolutely that in the popular speech of central Arabia there is no proper *i'rāb* and that it is a question whether *i'rāb* still plays any part even in the literary tradition. This is especially directed against Palgrave. It is certainly a great pity that the only Arabists in the exact sense who have ever visited Nejd should have been Wallin and Palgrave. Neither Doughty, Euting, Huber, Nolde, Pelly, or the Blunts would claim such a title, and even Palgrave himself had received no modern training. Palgrave's veracity, of course, is in strong doubt, yet Wallin's report, apart from picturesqueness of statement, essentially supports him, and Landberg found with Bedawī tribes near Jidda practically the same linguistic phenomena. It is quite intelligible that travelers entering Arabia and speaking and understanding only the broken Arabic of Syria should have been met with the same kind of talk. Throughout this whole section Socin shows a marked hostility to Palgrave—shared, it is true, by many other Arabists—which he supports in every possible way. One is a story picked up from the Jesuit fathers at Ghazir that Palgrave got no farther than the Gyōf, was stopped there by illness, and reached al-Ḥasā by another route, while his native companion went on through Arabia. Yet, though he passes it on, Socin evidently gave no great credence to this story; it might easily have arisen after Palgrave had left the Society of Jesus. Against it all is to be set Stumme's note (iii, p. 340) that Glaser had added to Socin's manuscript at this point numerous notes in defense of Palgrave. Of these Stumme wished to make use, but Glaser refused his permission—a most unfortunate reticence on the part of a scholar not famous for reticence. That Palgrave was a *bête noire* to Socin is evident throughout; e. g., iii, pp. 5, 9. Finally, the glossary of nearly eighty pages contains what perhaps in the end will be the most valuable philological side of the book. It is worked out with the greatest care and shows Professor Socin's wide knowledge of Arabic dialects at its best. The texts will be replaced by others more perfect; the sketch of grammar is more or less tentative and does not rest on a deep and recent knowledge of the Nejd dialect as actually spoken; this lexicographical element will probably be the most abiding.

Definite criticism of so monumental a work, left us by a master who has now gone to his rest, can be little in place. All that the following notes will attempt, therefore, is to bring out the character of the book and its probable place in our knowledge of Arabia. First, as to the texts: there are already in existence and in European hands two great collections of such poetry as is here, and from these it may be that the next step will be taken. They are those of Wetzstein and of Landberg. With regard to both it was certainly unfortunate that the whole body of material could not have been worked up together by one scholar. The *qaṣīdas* would certainly have attained a more perfect form. The problem here, indeed, is almost exactly that which met the second generation of Arabic humanists when they attempted to arrange, to correct, and to explain the spoils of poetry gathered by the first generation in the desert. The parallelism is most complete. In both cases we have a large poetical

literature existing partly in *safīnas*, the books of words used by the wandering reciters, and partly carried in the memory, subject to all manner of corruptions, dislocations, imperfections; this is in a formal literary dialect varying more or less from the language of common life; each, too, is connected with the other by unbroken descent; the poets of today with their reciters are the heirs in the right line of the heathen singers before Muḥammad and their *rāwīs*. To both, then, enter from without eager gatherers, students, editors. They try to learn this language of the desert and to steep themselves in this literature. They build up complete poems out of fragments, reject interpolations, collect the poems of each poet separately, purify the texts from the blunders of reciters and equip them with commentaries and introductions. Unhappily, in this new invasion of the desert, we have not yet got so far; we are still at the stage of collecting and studying line by line. The object, too, of some at least of us is different. The sternly scientific attitude toward these songs which sees in them only stuff for grammar and lexicon would hardly have been intelligible to the earlier humanists who, however much they professed to hunt them for the light they cast on the Qur'ān, had a full feeling for their beauty and rolled their strong, sweet lines with delight from their lips. In these present songs, in spite of loss and corruptions, the flash of the old beauty still lives, and it is hard to understand Socin's attitude when he judges that the people of Nejd have no right to be proud of them. Any people might be proud of such a sweep in literature, from the sixth to the twentieth century. Unhappily, the translation gives little chance to judge of this. It has been made on the severest principles of literal accuracy and elaborate prosaicism; in it is no touch of the glint and glamor of the originals. For that it is necessary to turn to the Arabic, and the student of literature at large is thus shut out from a source the value of which for him would be high. Another point to which Socin seems hardly to have done justice is the feeling for rhythm and meter among the Arabs. Here he is at odds with the experience of both Sachau and Landberg and with his own essential principles. It is hard to see how it can be possible, if the Arabs have no special feeling for rhythm and meter, to apply metrical schemes with any certainty to correct their texts. Yet that is precisely the point in which Socin's method differs from that of older investigators, Wetzstein for example. Generally, indeed, it is to be regretted that Socin, on this and on other sides, should have been limited to so few representatives of the Nejd literary culture. His authorities may have been deficient in metrical feeling, just as they were evidently deficient in their tradition and interpretation of texts. There have been eminent European actors, for that matter, who had the queerest ideas about the meaning, and even wording, of certain passages in their parts. As for the general status of letters in Nejd, the mere fact that the edition of aṭ-Ṭabarī's *Tafsīr*, which is being printed at Cairo, is based on a manuscript in the library of the Emirs of the family of ar-Rashīdat Ḥāil, should make us pause at too hasty generalization. It is highly probable

that a well-read Arabist who could make himself a *persona grata* would find there not only manuscripts, but an intelligent interest in them and knowledge of them. Arabia does not consist of Bedawin only.

What, now, to sum up, is the new thing which we have here? The book has, as was said at first, very many sides. It touches the Old Testament in ii, 142, for example, where Hos. 7:14 is explained; folklore in ii, 64, where the use of different suits of armor by the hero of a tale is touched; the old Arabic poetry in ii, 66, where we have a parallel to vs. 66 of the *Mu'allaga* poem of 'Antara. But the new thing which this book brings is the fact that in Arabia at the present day we have a lineal and legitimate descendant of the old classical poetry, of the same stuff and kind as to nature and as to art. If it could only be made accessible and real to students of literature! But that will come.

The editor, Professor Stumme, Socin's successor at Leipzig, has done his work admirably.

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#### ON ECCLESIASTICUS.<sup>1</sup>

The present volume forms the concluding part of a work which all students of the Old Testament will regard with interest, namely, a complete and uniform publication of all those portions of the Hebrew text of Bar Sira which are thus far known. The first volume, which was published in 1898, contained chaps. 39:15—49:11, and was reviewed for this JOURNAL in the October number of the year 1898, pp. 42—48. The plan and method of the present volume are the same as those of its predecessor, and for some of the leading characteristics the reader may be referred to the former review.

The portion of Ecclesiasticus here published includes chaps. 3:6—16:26 (numbered 16:24 in both text and commentary, but not in the Introduction); parts of 18, 19, 20 (omitted on the title page), 25 and 26; 30:11 (incorrectly printed "31:11" on the title page)—33:3; 35:9 (title page, "35:19")—38:27; 49:12c (title page, "49:11")—51:30. The Hebrew text is printed on the left-hand page, the French translation on the right-hand page, while the lower half of either page is occupied with critical notes, chiefly of a textual character. An Introduction of seventy pages gives a description of the four manuscript fragments on which the text is based, and discusses some of the most important questions relating to the origin and affinities of this new Hebrew version. At the end of the book there is a long list of corrections and additions, both to this volume and to the preceding one.

Students of Bar Sira will look first of all to see what conclusion M. Lévi has reached as to the age and authority of this Hebrew text. In his former publication, he defended the thesis that the newly found ver-

<sup>1</sup> L'ECCLESIASTIQUE, ou la Sagesse de Jésus, fils de Sira. Texte original hébreu édité, traduit et commenté par Israel Lévi. Deuxième partie. Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1901. lxx+243 pp.